

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF
FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 4-FS-M-SP-02-18

Effective Date: 6:00 a.m.,
June 18, 2018

Issued at: Sand Point, AK

Date: 4:30 p.m., June 18, 2018

Expiration Date: 12:00 a.m.,
June 26, 2018

Unless superseded by subsequent
emergency order.

EXPLANATION: This emergency order (EO) establishes one 40-hour commercial salmon fishing period for set gillnet gear and one 40-hour commercial salmon fishing period for drift gillnet and seine gear in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries.

REGULATORY TEXT: 5AAC 09.320. Fishing Periods. Is superseded to read: (b)(2), (c), (d), (e), and (f) salmon may be taken in the Bechevin Bay Section of the Northwestern District, Unimak District, Southwestern District, West Pavlof Bay and East Pavlof Bay sections of the South Central District, and Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District during the following times;

The South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries will open to commercial salmon fishing for set gillnet gear from 6:00 a.m. Friday, June 22 for 40 hours until 10:00 p.m. Saturday, June 23.

The South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries will open to drift gillnet and seine gear from 6:00 a.m. Wednesday, June 20 for 40 hours until 10:00 p.m. Thursday, June 21.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By Delegation to: _____

Jeff Wadle
Regional Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Consistent with 16.05.060. Emergency Orders., and under the guidance of 5 AAC 39.220 (a) Policy for the management of mixed stock salmon fisheries. (a)(b) and 5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries., the department uses EO authority to reduce the South Peninsula fishing periods.

The current early-run sockeye salmon escapement through the Chignik River weir is at an historical low. Since Statehood there has never been this low of escapement of sockeye salmon at this time through the Chignik weir. Current escapement through the Chignik weir as of June 18 is 11,069 sockeye salmon and the escapement objective for June 20 is 150,000-230,000 sockeye salmon, despite no commercial fishing in the Chignik Management Area. Currently it does not appear the Chignik system early-run sockeye salmon will achieve the lower bound of the escapement goal (350,000 fish).

Past studies have shown there is a significant number of Chignik sockeye salmon traversing the South Peninsula management area during June. At this time due to the severity of the apparent run failure, the department will exercise the commissioner's, or designee's, EO authority to supersede EO No. 4-FS-M-SP-01-18 and reduce the seine and drift gillnet fishing period of Tuesday, June 20 and the set gillnet period of June 22 to 40 hours in the Unimak District, Bechevin Bay Section of the Northwestern District, Southwestern District, West and East Pavlof Bay sections, of the South Central District, and the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District. This management action will allow some number of Chignik sockeye salmon to travel through the Area M South Peninsula fishery and escape through the Chignik weir. The last fishing period of June will be announced in a subsequent News Release.

DISTRIBUTION: Lieutenant Governor; Commissioner, Department of Fish and Game; Director, Division of Commercial Fisheries; Executive Director, Boards Support Section; Director and Detachment Commander, Division of Alaska Wildlife Troopers.

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